

SECRET

17 November 1976

The Military Balance

1. The military balance on the Korean peninsula is stable at this time and will remain so for the foreseeable future.

- The key elements ensuring stability are the US-South Korean Mutual Defense Treaty and the presence of US forces in South Korea.
- If US forces were to be withdrawn or were not immediately available, North Korea would enjoy a military advantage over the South.

2. While South Korea has an edge in numbers of men under arms and reserves, a massive military procurement program since 1970 has resulted in major advantages in favor of the North. North Korea has

- nearly two-and-one-half times as many tanks
- one-third more armored personnel carriers
- more artillery
- over twice as many jet combat aircraft
- a three-fold advantage in naval craft.

3. The South has more quality aircraft and better trained pilots, but the North's superior numbers might exhaust the South's assets, particularly since Seoul intends to rely heavily on its air force for ground support.

SECRET

4. Strategic elements favoring North Korea.

While Seoul would have certain advantages of being on the defensive, the North's advantages are significant.

25X1

- North Korean divisions are largely already in the formations needed to launch an offensive.
- Seoul is about 30 miles from the DMZ.
- The loss of Seoul could severely limit ROK ability to continue to fight, or even result in a collapse.

5. ROK lack of supplies could seriously impair the South's plans to destroy the enemy north of Seoul.

- Pyongyang
 - has well-developed arms industry (except for missiles and aircraft)
 - is believed to have stockpiled sufficient reserves for a short war (less than 30 days).
- Seoul
 - has no significant arms industry
 - has limited reserve supplies
 - is heavily dependent on US for resupply and logistics support.

SECRET

SECRET

Approved For Release 2003/09/29 : CIA-RDP81T00700R000100050009-0

- 3 -

25X1

6. In sum, we do not believe that South Korea, without the immediate aid of US combat forces, has the weaponry or reserve supplies on hand required to negate the North Korean advantages.

(N.B. The intelligence community has not assessed the chances of holding Seoul with the present balance on the peninsula, i.e. US and ROK against the DPRK. DOD operational sensitivities being what they are, it is unlikely that the community will do so.)

Approved For Release 2003/09/29 : CIA-RDP81T00700R000100050009-0

SECRET